free cars?

In the city of Misty Falls, where shadows danced with secrets and morals lay forgotten, three young souls, barely men, found themselves entangled in a night they would never forget. They were known as the Yellow Jackets, a street gang with more ambition than sense.

The leader, Darius, was a lean figure with eyes that held a perpetual challenge. His right-hand man, Marcus, was built like a tank, loyal to a fault and always ready for a fight. And then there was Kevin, the youngest, whose heart still held a flicker of innocence, a stark contrast to the world they inhabited.

Late one night, as a thick mist clung to the streets, their eyes fell upon a sight that sparked their interest - a white Cadillac, an older model, gleaming under the dim streetlights near the old church house. It was clean, well-polished, a stark contrast to the rundown neighborhood. Little did they know, this car belonged to a being far removed from their world, a demon known as Charles.

"That's the one, boys," Darius whispered, his eyes gleaming with mischief. "Let's take it for a spin."

With practiced ease, they bypassed the car's security and were soon cruising down the highway, windows down, music blasting. The cool night air rushed through their hair as they laughed and joked, the thrill of the stolen ride coursing through their veins.

"I can't believe our luck," Marcus shouted over the music. "This ride is smooth as silk."

As they sped past the Misty Pines Forest, a sense of unease began to creep in. The trees seemed to loom over the road, their branches like skeletal fingers reaching out. The forest was a place spoken of in hushed tones, a place where strange things happened.

Suddenly, as they rounded a bend, the car lurched violently. The world seemed to twist and blur, the familiar highway vanishing into an abyss of darkness. A collective gasp filled the car as they braced themselves for the inevitable crash. But it never came.

Instead, the car came to an abrupt halt, the engine sputtering and dying. They were no longer on the highway. The forest had vanished, replaced by a desolate expanse of sand and rock. Before them lay a lake, its surface as black as ink, reflecting the starless sky above.

"Where are we?" Kevin asked, his voice trembling.

Darius tried the ignition, but the car remained dead. A shiver ran down his spine as he took in their surroundings. This was no ordinary place.

As they stepped out of the car, a bone-chilling wind swept across the lake, carrying with it the faint scent of decay. The silence was deafening, broken only by the gentle lapping of the water against the shore.

"This ain't right," Marcus muttered, his eyes darting around nervously.

jay ride and gboy meet

voodalla

Jay Ride and JBoy emerged from the darkness of the woods, their breath visible in the cold air. The sky above was a deep shade of black, threatening more than just night. They had been at Brandon's party, pumped with energy and laughter, when suddenly, everything changed. "man I think we must have fell asleep or somehting what was we smoking" Gride asked fixing his chain, this dont look like the wellman condomenium building my dog" One moment their friends were there, the next, they were gone. The howling in the distance made the hairs on the back of their necks stand up. "wow, i think we dead " jride said eyes huge with potential tears , how we dont remember getting here , plus what was that read light, "

"Yo, what the heck is going on?" Jay Ride said, glancing around nervously. He pulled his hoodie tighter around him, trying to shield himself from the eerie chill that seeped through the trees.

"I don't know, man. This place gives me the creeps," gBoy replied, shivering slightly. He kicked at a stone on the ground. They had walked for what felt like hours, their laughter fading into worry.

Every time they heard a rustle, they looked over their shoulders, half-expecting their friends to pop out and scare them. But it was just the two of them, lost in Voodalla.

"Let's find a way back," JBoy suggested, looking around for any sign of familiarity. The trees were thick and twisted, blocking out the moonlight.

"Yeah, this is not cool," Jay Ride agreed. Just as they turned to retrace their steps, a flash of metal caught Jay Ride's eye.

“Hey, look over there!” He pointed down a narrow path. “There’s a car!”

They stepped cautiously toward the old car. It sat covered in dirt and leaves, like it had been abandoned for years. The paint was faded, and the windows were cracked. The night was pitch black, making the car seem almost like a ghost itself.

“Dude, this thing is ancient,” gBoy mused, leaning closer to inspect it. He peered inside, and the faint glow from his phone illuminated a paper lying on the dashboard. “Check this out.”

“What’s it say?” Jay Ride asked, coming up beside him.

With careful fingers, JBoy lifted the note. “It says, ‘For what it’s worth, stay on the road, or they will get you.’”

“Are you serious? Who wrote that?” Jay Ride said, his voice rising. Unease crawled up his spine. “What does it even mean?”

“I don’t know, man. But something isn’t right,” JBoy replied. The howling echoed again, closer this time.

“Let’s get outta here,” Jay Ride urged, glancing over his shoulder. They both felt the weight of unseen eyes watching them. The last thing they wanted was to be the next ones to vanish like their friends. They climbed into the car, its leather seats cracked and worn.

“Do you even know how to drive this thing?” JBoy asked, flicking on the headlights. A weak beam cut through the darkness, revealing the trees that pressed in around them. the keys were

still in the ignition dried blood stained the dash board, it looked to be someone's charity gift who had survived.

“Uh, kind of. Just give me a sec,” Jay Ride replied, fumbling with the ignition. To his surprise, the engine roared to life after a few coughs and sputters. “Yes! We’re going to be alright!”

They both sighed with relief as they backed out onto the road, but the relief was short-lived. The car moved slowly, almost as if it didn’t want to leave. At a maximum of forty five miles per hour they were moving but barely, definitely safer than then walking.

“I don’t like this, man. It feels wrong,” gBoy said nervously, his gaze darting around. “The note, the howling... what if those are the things that are gonna get us?”

“Just chill, bro,” Jay Ride replied, though his voice lacked confidence. “We just got to stay on the road, right?”

up the road the head lights caught a glimpse of what look like a girl walking, they hit the horn and the girl turned around it was one of the girls from the party “veronica” she rain to the car and pulled the back door open. “oh my god, she said gasping for air , im so glad to see you guys, there's something big and black creeping through the bushes but it thinks i cant here it. its really bad at hiding.” just as they spoke the car was rambed! it tilted lightly. “oh my god veronica screamed to the top of her lungs” the thing then returned to the tree line. searching through the dash board a small hand gun fell out. “where'd you get that “ “dont know just fell out , j ride answered. in a rush the thing rambed the car again knocking the door lose , still on the hinges it made crazy noises. it then darted off into the bushes again, then they saw it two of them! in the rearviews. nasty evil looking dogs with hellish stripes and strange face markings.

veronica “what do we do?”

jride “you tell me”

g-boy “well shoot , you did find a gun j”

jride crawled to the back seat and fired a shot really close to the animals grazing its ear, wounded it rolled around in the dirt howling like a man and then finally started laughing although it was hurt, it got up and darted deeper into the forest.”

“good shot my boy gboy yelled dapping his homie with the killer aim”

“ i told you im a real gangbanger he said before laughing, veronica hugged both of them she was now elated to be with them, to think she was going to be dog chow to those things.

they continued to ride trying to figure out where they were , the figured the creatures were werewolves or something , they had no way of explaining anything else ,

veronica “ so where to the next gas station “

jride “apparently the note says stay on this ugly dark road and we will find people at the end, don't know how true it is , but its safter than walking with cugo and friends”

As they drove, the howling grew louder, piercing through the stillness of the night. Shadows darted in and out of view, and the trees seemed to lean closer, almost touching the car. Jay Ride gripped the steering wheel tightly, trying to keep his focus.

“Whoa, did you see that?” JBoy exclaimed suddenly, pointing to the side of the road. “I thought I saw something move!” “shit just stay calm we got two bullets left.’ brandon has tossed them into a nightmare that they would never forget. the road was pitch dark except the reddish looking moon , the street was narrow and on the sides were a steep muddy cliff, the car often stalled but

didnt stop , at top speed it reached 50 mph when floored. the gas was three quaters of a tank at least they had that in their favor.

“Forget it,” Jay Ride said, accelerating just a bit. “It’s just your imagination. Stay focused.”

But just then, a massive figure emerged from the shadows. Jay Ride slammed on the brakes. They both stared wide-eyed as a tall, shadowy creature stepped into the beam of the headlights. “whoa not more , what is this ?”

“What the...?” JBoy gasped, fear creeping into his voice.

The creature’s eyes glowed an unsettling shade of red, and it howled again, sending chills down their spines. It wasn’t alone; more figures appeared behind it, their forms indistinguishable in the dark.

“Drive! Drive!” JBoy shouted, panic rising in his throat.

Jay Ride slammed his foot down on the gas pedal. The car lurched forward, but the figures started to race alongside them, their movements impossibly fast as they howled in pursuit.

“Stay on the road! Stay on the road!” JBoy yelled as they zoomed down the dark path, the shadows closing in. “oh my god we are going to die veronica screamed clinging to jride for dear life, her grip squeezed the life out of him. jride fire the last two shots from the rusty old gun peircing the legs of two of the ferrocious looking animals and again they scattered and left.

In that moment, Jay Ride and JBoy realized that the note was

right death certain if they got out the car . They had to stay on the road, or the darkness would consume them. That night, they fought to escape Voodalla, the haunted woods that had claimed so many before them. But as the howls filled their ears, they couldn’t shake the feeling that someone, or something, was waiting for them just around the corner. Hours had passed and up around the street became wider sleepy they took turns driving. now down a large hill the began to see an encampment well lit up at the base the hill. a large abandon looking city full of camp lights. on the top of a wall some way waved for them to come down, astonished they silently droved towards the stone city.

brandons feast party j-ride jboy

The City of Misty Falls was a place where the nights bled into days, fueled by neon lights and pulsing beats. It was a city of excess, where rules were suggestions and pleasure was the only law. High above the chaos, in a skyscraper that pierced the clouds, Brandon, son of Charles, was throwing a party.

Brandon wasn't your typical host. He had eyes that seemed to hold ancient secrets and a smile that could charm the devil himself – a fitting trait, considering his lineage. Twenty-five couples, the city's elite, had received his exclusive invitation. They arrived in limousines and sports cars, dressed in their finest, ready to indulge in whatever Brandon had planned.

Inside, the penthouse throbbed with music. The bass vibrated through the floor, reaching up to tickle their chests. Lights flashed, painting the room in a kaleidoscope of colors. Drinks flowed freely, each concoction more potent than the last. Brandon moved through the crowd, a predator in his own domain, making sure everyone was having an unforgettable time.

"This is insane, Brandon," said Veronica, a socialite with a penchant for drama, as she took a sip of her glowing cocktail. "You always know how to throw the best parties."

Brandon chuckled, his eyes glinting mischievously. "The night is still young, Veronica. I have a few surprises up my sleeve."

Hours passed in a blur of dancing, laughter, and whispered conversations. As the night reached its peak, Brandon took center stage. The music faded, and a hush fell over the room. All eyes were on him as he clapped his hands, a signal for his grand finale.

"My friends," he announced, his voice amplified through the speakers, "I have a special treat for you all. Something you won't find anywhere else."

He gestured towards a large, ornate closet that no one had noticed before. It stood against the far wall, its dark wood contrasting with the modern decor. A sense of anticipation filled the air, mixed with a touch of unease.

With a flourish, Brandon threw open the closet doors. Instead of clothes or storage, a swirling vortex of crimson energy filled the space. It pulsed and crackled, drawing the air towards it with a hungry force. Gasps echoed through the room as the partygoers stared in disbelief.

"What is that?" someone shouted over the rising wind.

Brandon's smile widened, revealing teeth that seemed a little too sharp. "A gateway," he said, his voice dripping with dark excitement. "A gateway to a place where your wildest dreams - and your darkest nightmares - come true."

Panic erupted. People scrambled back, desperate to escape the mesmerizing pull of the vortex. But it was too late. The swirling red energy reached out, grabbing them one by one. Screams filled the air as couples were torn apart, sucked into the unknown.

Mark and Sarah, a young couple who had come to the party looking for a thrill, found themselves clinging to each other, fighting against the force that threatened to consume them.

"Mark, I'm scared!" Sarah cried, her voice barely audible above the roar of the vortex.

"Hold on!" Mark yelled back, his grip tightening around her hand. But it was no use. The vortex was too strong. They were pulled apart, their screams fading as they disappeared into the swirling red.

One by one, the guests vanished, their screams echoing in the penthouse before being swallowed by the void. In a matter of minutes, the room was empty, save for Brandon, who stood before the open closet, his eyes gleaming with satisfaction.

"Enjoy your stay," he whispered to the empty space, before snapping his fingers and closing the doors, sealing the vortex once more.

Those who were unfortunate enough to be pulled into the vortex found themselves in a place unlike anything they had ever imagined. They landed in Voodalla, a dark and twisted forest where the trees clawed at the sky and the shadows danced with a life of their own. The air was thick with the smell of decay and the sound of unseen creatures

rustling in the undergrowth.

As Mark stumbled to his feet, he realized he was alone. Sarah was nowhere to be seen. Panic set in as he called out her name, his voice trembling in the oppressive silence.

Suddenly, a pair of glowing eyes appeared in the darkness. A low growl echoed through the trees. Mark froze, his heart pounding in his chest. He could make out the shapes of large, wolf-like creatures surrounding him, their eyes burning with malevolent intent. But these were no ordinary wolves. They were twisted and deformed, with unnatural features and an aura of dark magic about them.

"What the hell are those things?" Mark muttered to himself, his voice barely a whisper.

Before he could react, the creatures lunged.

Meanwhile, Sarah found herself in a different part of the forest. She was surrounded by strange symbols carved into the trees, and the ground beneath her feet felt soft and spongy. The air hummed with an unsettling energy.

As she tried to get her bearings, she heard a chanting in the distance. Drawn by the sound, she cautiously made her way through the dense undergrowth. She came to a clearing where a group of figures in hooded robes danced around a bonfire. They were chanting in a language she didn't understand, their voices rising and falling in a hypnotic rhythm.

In the center of the circle, a figure stood tall and gaunt, his face hidden behind a mask of bone. He raised his hands, and the flames of the bonfire surged higher, casting eerie shadows across the clearing. Sarah realized with horror that she had stumbled upon some kind of dark ritual.

"This can't be happening," she whispered, her voice trembling with fear.

As the ritual reached its climax, the masked figure turned towards Sarah, his eyes piercing through the darkness. He raised a hand, and the chanting stopped. The figures in robes turned to face her, their eyes glowing with an unholy light.

Sarah knew she had to escape, but it was too late. They were already moving towards her, their hands outstretched, their intentions clear.

In the City of Misty Falls, the party was over. The music was silent, the lights were off, and the skyscraper stood empty, its dark windows reflecting the city's neon glow. Brandon, son of Charles, had achieved his goal. He had opened a gateway to a world of darkness and despair, and he had delivered his guests into its waiting arms. The city would soon forget about the vanished elite, chalking it up to another night of excess

gone wrong. But in Voodalla, Mark and Sarah, along with the others, were about to discover the true meaning of Brandon's twisted game. Their nightmares had only just begun.

ADD ONS

GAMER GARDENS, BRANDONS FEAST ,

The laughter of children mixed with the mechanical whir of rides at Gamer Gardens cheap excuse for a theme park riddled with law suits, the amusement park. The sun dipped below the horizon, painting the sky in shades of orange and purple. A gentle breeze rustled through the fake trees, carrying the scent of popcorn and cotton candy.

Suddenly, a hush fell over the crowd. A few thugs rolled dice in the back ground near the bathrooms. A strange figure entered the park. He was an old man, his skin as dark as the night, his eyes like burning coals. A large, wide-brimmed hat shadowed his face. He wore a long, black coat that seemed to swallow him whole. Slowing dragging his long legs and heavy gold chains he surely stood out .

His appearance was out of place among the cheerful crowd. Bryshere tugged at his mother's dress, pointing at the man. "Mommy, look at that scary man," he whispered. His mother, Sheela , hushed him, but she couldn't help but feel a sense of unease. “don’t look at him baby , he may be crazy , theres a lot those around here “

The man moved through the park with a strange, gliding motion. He stopped at the 'Cosmic Carousel', his eyes fixed on the

brightly colored horses. He climbed onto a black stallion, his movements stiff and unnatural. The ride operator, a young white girl named Jenny, approached him with a smile. "Sir, please fasten your seatbelt," she said politely.

The old man turned his gaze towards her, his eyes piercing. "I have no need for such things," he rasped, his voice like the rustling of dry leaves the new orlean southern accent stealing the show in the short conversation. Jenny hesitated, feeling a shiver run down her spine. She shrugged and started the ride. As the carousel spun, the old man sat motionless, his eyes fixed on some distant point.

Next, he went to 'The Twister', a spinning, tilting ride that was a favorite among teenagers. Again, he refused to wear a seatbelt, his eyes daring the ride operator to challenge him. Mark, a muscular young man operating the ride, felt a surge of anger. "Sir, it's for your safety," he insisted. " I cant stand this maybe we should just remove this guy?" he suggested to the manager. Confused they just let the man do what he wanted.

"Safety is an illusion," the old man said, his voice barely a whisper. Mark, unnerved by the man's intensity, reluctantly started the ride. The Twister spun and tilted, throwing its passengers around like ragdolls. Yet, the old man remained still, his hat firmly in place, his eyes burning with an unnatural light.

The park manager, Mr. Thompson, had been receiving complaints about the strange man that a crackhead was not following the rules on a roller coaster. Irritated, he approached him. "Sir, I'm going to have to ask you to leave," he said, his voice firm. "You're disturbing the other guests, and you're not following the safety regulations."

The old man slowly turned to face Mr. Thompson. A strange smile curled his lips. "You cannot stop what is coming," he whispered. Mr. Thompson felt a sudden chill, despite the warm evening air. "Security!" he called out.

As security guards approached, the sky turned an ominous shade of grey. The wind picked up, whipping through the park, scattering popcorn and trash. A low rumble of thunder echoed in the distance. The lights flickered, casting long, eerie shadows. They began to stare at him, they knew he was strange but they had no idea he had any power of any type.

People began to panic, running towards the exits. The old man Charles stood motionless, his eyes fixed on the 'Leviathan', the park's towering roller coaster. Lightning flashed, illuminating his face, revealing a network of strange markings etched into his dark skin. “looks like I got me sommo friends, I think my brothers will be awfully pleased”

He walked towards the Leviathan, his movements now fluid and purposeful. The security guards hesitated, unsure of what to do. The storm intensified, rain lashing down in sheets. The old man reached the base of the roller coaster, where its massive metal structure met the ground.

He raised his arms to the sky, his hat flying off in the wind. He began to chant in a strange, guttural language. The ground trembled. The air crackled with energy. People screamed.

Sarah clutched Timmy close, her heart pounding in her chest. Mark and Jenny huddled together, their faces pale with fear. Mr. Thompson watched in disbelief as the old man performed his

ritual.

Suddenly, a bright light flashed from the base of the roller coaster. Ten people standing nearby vanished into thin air. A collective gasp rose from the crowd. Then, just as quickly as it began, the light disappeared. ‘what in the” the manager yellowed get more security”

The old man lowered his arms, his eyes glowing with triumph. He turned and walked into the storm, his figure disappearing into the darkness. The rain stopped. The wind died down. The only sound was the terrified whimpering of the remaining park guests.

Mr. Thompson stood frozen, his mind struggling to comprehend what he had just witnessed. Sarah looked around frantically, counting her family members to make sure they were all there. Mark and Jenny stared at the empty space where their friends had been standing just moments before.

The police arrived, their sirens cutting through the silence. They questioned the witnesses, but no one could offer a rational explanation. The ten people were gone, vanished without a trace.

Gamer Gardens was closed indefinitely, the story was featured on the news . The Leviathan stood silent and menacing against the night sky. The laughter and joy that had once filled the park were replaced by fear and uncertainty. The news featured a segment called demon at the park the next day, a strange ominous story of a spirit snatcher walking in broad daylight.

No one ever saw the old man again. Some say he was a voodoo priest, others say he was a demon in disguise. Whatever he was, he left behind a chilling reminder that some things are beyond

human understanding. The mystery of the missing ten and the strange old man Charles remained unsolved, a dark stain on the memory of Gamer Gardens. A place once filled with laughter, now haunted by the whispers of the missing and the shadow of the voodoo man.

elise and a bike

The night was young and crisp and The air in Misty Falls always felt heavy. It was a city built on shadows and strange quiet. Rain seemed to fall even when the sky was clear, leaving everything damp and cold. Elise gripped the handlebars of her old blue bicycle tightly. She was only 15, and the journey home from the pharmacy always felt too long. she stayed in a near by housing project that had recently been built. the pharmacy wasn't far from home, she was use to the dark windy trip down the block.

She had picked up medicine for her grandmother, a small bottle of shimmering blue liquid. The streets were mostly empty. Most people in Misty Falls stayed indoors after sunset due to strange occurrences that just kept increasing . The streetlights flickered, casting long, unsteady shadows that danced like nervous ghosts.

As Elise pedaled past the abandoned clock tower, she felt a prickle on her neck. She glanced behind her. A black cab was crawling slowly a block back. It was an old model, boxy and dull, its chrome rusting. She couldn't see the driver clearly, but something about the way the cab moved made her heart beat faster. It was too slow for the road, almost hovering.

Elise sped up a little. She turned onto Willow Street, a narrow path lined with tall, silent apartment buildings. She checked her mirror again. The black cab followed. It kept the same distance, a silent, metal shadow. “nutjob, who is hiring these people” she thought before plugging back in her headphones.

Curiosity, a dangerous thing in Misty Falls, started to mix with her fear. Why would a cab be driving so slowly behind a girl on a bike? There were no other cars. road rage was one thing but night buddy attackers were on the rise, they were as strange as they were dangerous , they often didn't remember anything after they kill you with their car and then the worst, sometimes the body just disappeared no clues nothing just one culprit with no memory. some of these people were recruited some would say and others seemed to just be possessed by some eerie force late in the night.

She decided to test it. Elise cut sharply down an alleyway. This alley was rarely used, filled with overflowing dumpsters and the smell of wet cement. She pushed the pedals harder, her thin legs pumping. The sound of her bike chain rattled loudly in the narrow space.

She reached the end of the alley and risked another look back. The black cab was already there, turning into the alley entrance with surprising speed for such an old vehicle. The headlights were dim, yellow eyes watching her.

Panic set in. Elara pumped her legs until her lungs

burned. She swerved out onto Gray Street, a longer, more open road, hoping to outpace the strange vehicle. She pedaled furiously, her mind racing. She needed to get to Maple Avenue, the main street, where there might be other people.

The cab kept pace. It was close now, maybe only twenty feet behind her. her raced and she knew he had bad intentions, it was time to take the headphones out, sweaty and scared she carefully paced her self her eyes wide with realistic fear. She could hear a low, almost humming sound coming from its engine, a sound that felt wrong, unnatural.

Finally, she saw the familiar lights of Maple Avenue ahead. It was the busiest part of their district, even late at night. She aimed for the center of the sidewalk, fast she bolted in the opposite direction, intending to ride directly toward the brightly lit bakery where Mr. Henry often worked late.

Just as Elise burst onto the main street, a blur of movement happened beside her. A short man, dressed in a thick, dark coat, was moving fast, weaving through the few pedestrians near the corner shop. He was moving much faster than a normal person should move.

The man did not look at Elara. He seemed focused only on the space immediately in front of her. With a sudden, powerful shove, the man impacted Elara’s side thrusting her far from the bike taking himself to the ground as well.

Elise cried out, losing all control. She tumbled hard onto

the gritty pavement, “aaah” she screamed holding her knees, the pharmacy bag flying open. The small bottle of blue medicine rolled under a nearby bench far from her line of sight.

She looked up instantly, expecting to see the man standing over her, perhaps the cab driver emerging. But both were gone.

Instead, she stared in wide-eyed confusion at the spot where her bicycle had been.

The black cab was stopped directly where she fell, its doors shut tight. The driver’s window was rolled down a fraction. Elara could finally see the driver. His face was pale, almost white, and his eyes were too wide, too focused. He was staring not at Elara, but at the space where her bike had been just a second before. His expression was a strange mix of terror and intense satisfaction.

Then it happened.

Where the blue bicycle had rested against the curb, a violent shimmer started. It was like heat rising off asphalt on a summer day, but this was cold. The metal frame of the bike seemed to vibrate, then it began to darken, turning a deep, oily black. A thick plume of black, acrid smoke erupted from the bike, smelling faintly of ozone and burned metal.

Mr. Henry , the baker, rushed out of his shop door, drawn by the strange noise and smoke.

"What in the name of the falls is that?" Mr. Henry shouted, shielding his face from the dark cloud.

Elise scrambled backward on her hands and knees. The smoke thickened rapidly, swirling around the stationary black cab. It was not dissipating; it was contracting, pulling the remnants of the bike inward.

In less than three seconds, the bike was gone. There was no twisted metal, no broken plastic, just a small patch of perfectly clean, dry pavement where the bike had been. The black smoke vanished as if sucked into a vacuum.

The humming noise from the cab stopped instantly.

The driver blinked slowly, looking down at his empty hands resting on the steering wheel. He took a deep, shuddering breath, then violently cranked the window shut. He slammed the car into gear, and the black cab shot forward, not smoothly, but with a violent lurch, disappearing around the corner onto a dark side street, leaving streaks of unnatural shadow behind it.

Elara sat frozen on the ground. Mr. Henry knelt beside her, his usual jolly face now tight with concern.

"Elise! Are you hurt? What happened to your bike?" he asked, looking wildly around the empty street.

Elara slowly pointed to the clean spot on the pavement. "It**... it went somewhere,"** she whispered, tasting the metallic fear in her mouth. "The cab driver, he looked... like he was watching it leave." ripe ,and clear as the

kids piled onto the bus after the school dance. Laughter filled the